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Security Council

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Letter dated 20 July 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instruction from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you, in your capacity as President of the Security Council, the statement delivered on 15 July 2017 by the President of the Presidency of the Council of the Government of National Accord, Faiez Mustafa Serraj, to the Libyan people, which presents an initiative for a road map (see annex).

I request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Elmahdi S. **Elmajerbi**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 20 July 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

Statement delivered on 15 July 2017 by the President of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord, Faiez Mustafa Serraj, to the Libyan people setting out his proposed initiative

I address you today at a critical juncture in our country's history. I am fully aware of the suffering that citizens have been enduring — not just now, but for the past several decades. I address you at a time when everyone hopes that our country will join the ranks of the developed world and enjoy democracy and true freedom. However, we have been visited by new tragedies over the past six years, and we have concluded that we are responsible for our previous state of affairs. No one is more responsible than anyone else for present state of affairs. All are now equal. We have both erred and been in the right, and now the time has come for us to unite and save our country.

My people, I address you in all honesty and transparency, in order to inform you of the reality of the situation.

It has been more than a year since the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord began working in Tripoli. That period has been marked by political, economic, financial and security crises and challenges, the most obvious of which were the lack of commitment on the part of the bodies arising from the Libyan Political Agreement to fulfilling all of the duties set out in that Agreement and the sharp division within State institutions. Nonetheless, we did all we could to mend the rift and achieve unity. We extended the hand of reconciliation to all.

The Political Agreement was meant to be a transitional measure designed to promote coexistence and establish the conditions under which the conflict and fighting could be brought to an end, and we could transition peacefully into a phase of stability and turn the page on the past. The task of the Presidency Council is to provide leadership through this period and lay the foundations of a democratic, civil State, a State of laws and institutions that provides security and a dignified existence for its citizens. We have stressed to everyone, on more than one occasion, that we are not a party to the conflict. We would like, instead, to be part of the solution. The nation is built with the brawn and intellect of its entire people, without exception.

From the outset, we have been determined to overcome the difficulties facing us and address the crises wracking our country, crises that have been going on for years. You are all aware of the economic and financial difficulties that we have been facing from the beginning, including budget shortfalls, a sharp decline in oil production and the failure of the Central Bank of Libya to adopt immediately effective financial policies, in order to resolve the liquidity crisis and prevent the exchange rate of the Libyan dinar from collapsing. We have done everything that we can at both the local and international levels, so that we can revive the economy and spend on security, health care, education and other services.

From the outset, the Presidency Council has strived assiduously to increase oil production. We have been level-headed, tolerant and far-reaching in our vision. We have not allowed ourselves to be drawn in by the repeated military escalations that have occurred at the ports. Aware of the enormity of the responsibility, we have

strived to avoid conflict and stem violence. Oil is a resource that belongs to all Libyans and is their sole source of livelihood. It was imperative that it should be kept out of the political struggle. Since we began our work in Tripoli nearly a year ago, oil production has jumped from 150,000 barrels per day to nearly 1 million barrels per day. Nonetheless, corruption has now become even greater, as has the number of those who steal public funds. Meanwhile, the members of the House of Representatives and the State Council are utterly incapable of fulfilling their political duties, so that they can set things right and hold accountable those responsible.

Libyans have run out patience. The time has come for us to work together. We may therefore be compelled to take extraordinary measures in order to address the situation.

The security situation is one of the most difficult issues to address. It is clear that numerous armed groups of various configurations and names are present in most cities. Our predecessors did not understand the danger of the proliferation of arms and did not attempt to collect them from the beginning. We are now reaping the fruits of that. Nonetheless, we addressed this problem in a balanced and realistic manner. Despite all challenges, the military and security institutions of the State have begun to make their presence felt. This task requires patience and a comprehensive programme. Our task has been, and continues to be, to stop the shedding of Libyan blood as much as possible, to strive to extricate the country from this predicament with as little loss of life as possible, and to avoid the destruction of the people's institutions and civilian property.

Young people have been integrated into the military and the police and their affiliated security agencies. We have stood up resolutely to those who have chosen the path of anarchy, including those who thought they could undermine security in Tripoli recently. The security and agencies proved that they were capable of providing security to the entire capital, thanks to the bravery of our youth and those who fell in the line of duty, all of whom proved their desire to ensure the security and safety of civilians, regardless of the sacrifice that had to be made. God willing, our policies will succeed.

When we speak of sacrifice, we must never forget our heroes who sacrificed their lives to eradicate terrorism in Sirte, despite the embargo that is in place and the paucity of resources. Our heroes who participated in the Bunyan al-Marsus operation made the ultimate sacrifice for the well-being of the country and in order to stamp out a scourge that has proliferated because of internecine conflict, the struggle over the mirage of power and efforts to take control of State capacities and resources.

In mentioning Sirte, I cannot overlook the sacrifice of our people in Benghazi and other Libyan cities. Whether they are members of the military or others, they are all Libyans. There are no conceptual differences between us when we fight against foreign terrorists who have entered the country. However, we cannot classify every countryman with whom we have differed as a terrorist.

With respect to foreign policy, we have dealt with the countries of the world in a balanced manner. We are not the hostage of foreigners. We have said, and continue to say, to those who meddle in our affairs: hands off Libya! We have made it clear that our request for assistance in revitalizing the country and countering terrorism is not an invitation to interfere and violate our sovereignty. Only when we unite, show respect for and uplift our people and revitalize our country will the world respect us and will we be able to realize sovereignty.

Having gone through all these challenges, and given my perspective on the current political situation and the difficulties that have led us to this political stalemate, and being inspired by a sense of national and moral responsibility to alleviate the suffering of the people, and in view of the inability of the House of Representatives and the State Council to come together in order to find a political comprise that would allow for the amendment of the Political Agreement, I have decided to present you today with my vision and proposal for the forthcoming phase, and to offer a road map that might help us to find a way out of this crisis and find common ground for arriving at a more secure and stable situation that is founded on the constitutional declaration, the Political Agreement and our national principles. It is an initiative that gives opportunity to all and opens the door for everyone to contribute to the building of the Libyan State of the future and to do so with a sense of free national will.

Following are the principles on which this vision and road map are based:

First, the vision and road map underscore the right of citizenship and that all Libyans, men and women, are equal in rights and responsibilities, regardless of their political affiliations or ideological inclinations.

Second, the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord is not a party to the conflict and does not support one side or another. This initiative is meant to complement, not replace, the Libyan Political Agreement and the path of consensus.

Third, no citizen, whether in Libya or abroad, whether supporter or opponent of the Agreement, should be excluded or marginalized. Efforts must begin immediately to return displaced persons and unite everyone in a spirit of true national reconciliation.

Fourth, the principles of the separation of powers and the peaceful transfer of power must be respected, and the military must be subordinate to the civilian executive authority.

Fifth, a comprehensive national defence and security strategy must developed, the branches of the military must be unified, the army and the police and their subsidiary security agencies should be supported and must begin to fulfil their duties, and a national programme must be put in place to collect arms and either demobilize the members of armed groups or integrate them into State institutions within a specific time frame.

Sixth, pubic rights and liberties must be protected and management reform must be pursued as part of the effort to achieve transparency and combat corruption. In addition, decentralization must be implemented in order to ensure the rights of all regions of Libya.

Seventh, transitional justice, redress and amnesty mechanisms must be operationalized, in order to achieve comprehensive national reconciliation.

Eighth, all cultures and social legacies must be respected and the system of quotas and partisanship must be ended.

Ninth, national resources and the economic and financial institutions of the State must be safeguarded, and wealth must be distributed justly among all Libyans.

The proposed road map is as follows:

- Combined presidential and parliamentary elections should be held in March 2018, leading to the election of a new President and a new Parliament. Their term should last three years at most, or until the constitution has been drafted

and put to a referendum. The President should be elected directly by the people.

- The Libyan Political Agreement and the Government of National Accord should remain in place until the elected President has appointed a new Head of Government and the Government has been confirmed by Parliament.
- The presidential and parliamentary elections should be organized, supervised and monitored by the High National Election Commission, acting in coordination with the United Nations and with the assistance of the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity and the European Union.
- Under the supervision and with the facilitation of the United Nations, the House of Representatives and the State Council should form dialogue committees to engage in societal dialogue among one another and with civil society institutions, with a view to preparing a draft electoral law and a proposed amendment to the Constitution determining the prerogatives of the President and the milestones of the coming phase.
- Under the auspices of the High National Election Commission, the Government of National Accord and the institutions in place across the country should provide the means and create an appropriate climate to make this requirement a success.
- A ceasefire and an end to all acts of hostility should be announced throughout the country, excepting counter-terrorism operations provided for under the Libyan Political Agreement and international instruments.
- The House of Representatives and the State Council should form a joint committee to begin integrating the divided sovereign State institutions.
- The Government of National Accord should provide the necessary services to and meet the needs of people in all regions. All of the institutions in place in the country should undertake to cooperate and ensure that the political conflict is kept separate from the provision of those services. The Central Bank of Libya should undertake promptly to enact policies to tackle the problem of liquidity and stabilize the exchange rate of the Libyan dinar.
- A high council for national reconciliation should be established. It should comprise 100 members to be nominated in accordance with standards and conditions to be determined by a preparatory committee for national reconciliation. The members of the council should be notables and heads of tribes of the cities of Libya, civil society institutions, women and youth. They should be selected in such a manner as to reflect all political and ideological groups; no one should be excluded or marginalized. The council's functions should include organizing the Libyan national reconciliation conference; examining mechanisms for transitional justice, redress and amnesty; establishing committees for inter-city reconciliation; and creating an appropriate climate for social dialogue to make a success of the legislative and presidential elections and the new constitution.

I have just described my vision for finding a way out of the current crisis and bringing Libyans together in a spirit of unity. I am confident that the spirit of patriotism will prevail over narrow self-interest. I call on everyone to make concessions, however painful they may be, to guide our nation to safety.

Allow me to take this opportunity to call on allied and friendly countries, the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity, the European Union and the United Nations to support this vision, and capitalize on the initiatives that have been put forward thus far in order to introduce the necessary amendments to the

Political Agreement and create an appropriate atmosphere for the democratic process and comprehensive national reconciliation.

Lastly, allow me once again to appeal to the Libyan people and all national stakeholders. Whatever your political allegiances, whatever your intellectual convictions, I urge you to take part with a positive spirit so that we can succeed in giving the nation what it deserves.

I urge our citizens abroad to return safely to our nation. I want to reach out to you and to every Libyan who misses their homeland. Let us turn a new page and look towards a radiant future for generations to come.

To the political actors, let me say this: Libyans' patience is running out. We should let the people decide and determine their own future. Let us make our people happy. Let us come together and bring an end to this division for the sake of Libya. Libya is a homeland for all. Let us walk together towards reconciliation and reconstruction.

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Security Council

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21 July 2017

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Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016)

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is the forty-first submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), paragraph 10 of resolution 2165 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2191 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2258 (2015) and paragraph 5 of resolution 2332 (2016), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report, every 30 days, on the implementation of the resolutions by all parties to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. The information contained herein is based on the data available to United Nations agencies, from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and from other Syrian and open sources. Data from United Nations agencies on their humanitarian deliveries have been reported for the period from 1 to 30 June 2017.

Box 1
Key points in June 2017

(1) The memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Russian Federation and Turkey on 4 May, continued to show a positive trend of reducing violence; however, hostilities have continued to be reported, especially in Dar'a and eastern Ghutah, and in areas held by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

(2) Only three inter-agency cross-line convoys were dispatched in June. Of these, only one, a convoy to east Harasta, Misraba and Mudayra on 19 June, reached a besieged area. As at the end of June, the United Nations had reached some 202,500 people under the convoy plan for June and July, which constitutes only 18 per cent of the 1,081,900 beneficiaries requested to be reached.

(3) Since the offensive began in the city of Raqqah on 6 June, heavy clashes, shelling and air strikes have resulted in significant civilian casualties and injuries as tens of thousands of people fled. The number of people displaced across the north-east of the country by the offensive continued to grow, with 19,889 people displaced during June.

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(4) As a result of recently signed local agreements, both Madaya in Rif Dimashq Governorate and the Wa'r neighbourhood of the city of Homs were removed from the list of besieged locations in June. Consequently, there are now 11 besieged locations, with 540,000 people in total remaining besieged. Although fewer areas are now besieged, the change is not wholly positive, as sieges are often lifted following periods of severe restrictions and heavy bombardment, and those leaving besieged areas often move to other areas of the country where they continue to face hardship.

(5) On 17 June, an inter-agency convoy to east Harasta, Misraba and Mudayra in Rif Dimashq Governorate came under sniper fire, leaving a driver injured, even though all deconfliction measures were in place.

II. Major developments

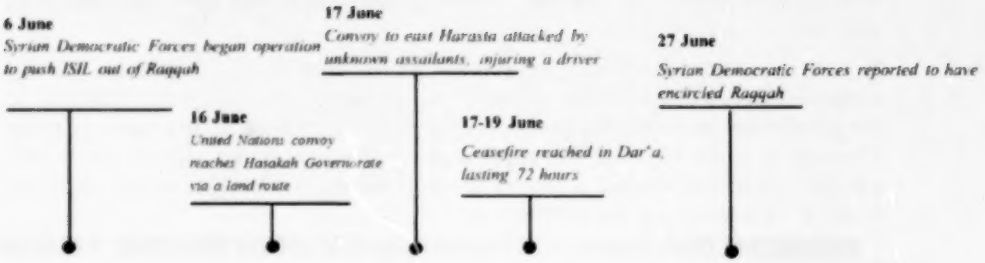
3. The memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Russian Federation and Turkey on 4 May, continued to have a positive effect of reducing violence in some areas. Nevertheless, hostilities continued to be reported in proposed de-escalation areas, especially in Dar'a and eastern Ghutah. Military operations also increasingly shifted towards ISIL-held areas. The Syrian Democratic Forces, backed by the international coalition led by the United States of America to counter ISIL, encircled the ISIL-held city of Raqqah. Meanwhile, pro-government forces intensified their advance in Raqqah, Homs and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates. On 18 June, the international counter-ISIL coalition shot down a Syrian military aircraft in Raqqah Governorate, resulting in the Russian Federation temporarily suspending its deconfliction mechanism with the United States.

4. Since the offensive began in Raqqah on 6 June, heavy clashes, shelling and air strikes have resulted in significant civilian casualties and injuries as tens of thousands of people fled. During June, the humanitarian situation deteriorated in the city, where an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 people remain trapped. Initial reports indicate that, as at 27 June, the Syrian Democratic Forces had encircled the city, leaving no formal exit routes for civilians. Families are reportedly taking significant risks to exit the city across conflict lines.

5. The situation inside the city is reportedly dire. Civilians continue to be killed by air and ground strikes, with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reporting that at least 173 people were killed in June alone. Some 27 civilians were killed and dozens more wounded at the Euphrates River while attempting to gain access to water. Scarcity of food and medicine continued to be reported. Markets and bakeries have remained closed, further limiting access to food and basic necessities.

6. The number of people displaced across the north-east of the country by the Raqqah offensive continued to grow, with 19,889 people displaced during June, many of whom more than once. To date, the total number of persons internally displaced since the onset of the offensive in November 2016 is 227,610, including 190,081 since 1 April 2017 alone. Daily arrivals were registered at the Mabrukah and Ayn Isa sites. Spontaneous settlements have also emerged and receded in line with the evolution of the security situation and advances by the Syrian Democratic Forces. Those who have been displaced continue to face protection concerns inside the camps relating to the screening process with personal identification taken for sometimes long periods, restrictions on movement and the confiscation of identity documents.

Figure I
Key dates in June 2017


6 June
Syrian Democratic Forces began operation to push ISIL out of Raqqah
16 June
United Nations convoy reaches Hasakah Governorate via a land route
17 June
Convoy to east Harasta attacked by unknown assailants, injuring a driver
17-19 June
Ceasefire reached in Dar'a, lasting 72 hours
27 June
Syrian Democratic Forces reported to have encircled Raqqah

Box 2
Land route from Damascus to Qamishli

(1) Qamishli has long been an essential United Nations hub for providing humanitarian assistance to hundreds of thousands of people in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic. Nevertheless, access has been more challenging since December 2015, when Turkey closed its border crossing point for security reasons, which it stated was temporary. In July 2016 the World Food Programme (WFP) logistics cluster began to airlift food and humanitarian supplies from Damascus to Qamishli for distribution. Between July 2016 and 25 June 2017, when the airlift operation was phased out, 533 airlifts were completed, transporting 18,857 tons of food, water and sanitation, nutrition, education, shelter and non-food item assistance on behalf of humanitarian actors, reaching nearly 400,000 people.

(2) In March 2017, in the light of the improved security environment, the United Nations requested the Government to consider approving the delivery of cross-line convoys to Hasakah Governorate, through a land route that runs from Aleppo via Manbij to Qamishli. By May, commercial traffic began moving again from Aleppo to Qamishli using this route.

(3) On 14 June, the Government responded positively to a United Nations request to deliver assistance to Qamishli. Following the approval, a three-truck WFP convoy was deployed on 14 June, arriving on 16 June. A total of 32 trucks from WFP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reached Qamishli by the end of June.

(4) Replacing the current airlift operation with land access to Hasakah is expected to save an estimated $19 million per year, enough to provide an additional 100,000 people with food assistance for a year.

7. The situation in Dar'a remained of particular concern for the 660,000 people in need in the governorate, with active conflict continuing even though Dar'a is one of the four de-escalation areas identified by the guarantors of the memorandum on de-escalation. The ongoing fighting notwithstanding, government forces declared a cessation of hostilities for 48 hours, beginning at noon on 17 June, to support local agreement negotiations; however, non-State armed opposition groups reportedly refused to comply with the cessation of hostilities, leading to renewed fighting.

8. The situation in eastern Ghutah continued to be marked by fighting among non-State armed opposition groups operating in the area, despite the area being one

of the four de-escalation areas identified by the guarantors of the memorandum on de-escalation. Shelling into eastern Ghutah was also reported to have continued throughout the month, resulting in civilian casualties. At the same time, shelling from eastern Ghutah by non-State armed opposition groups into Damascus was reported.

9. A team of United Nations experts was invited by the guarantors of the memorandum on de-escalation to attend part of the third technical-level session of the guarantors' joint working group on de-escalation in Moscow on 15 and 16 June. The experts were afforded the opportunity to highlight issues of interest to the United Nations and offered to continue to provide technical advice, where required, within the parameters of the Astana talks.

Protection

10. Air and ground-based strikes continued to kill and injure civilians in significant numbers. As in the past, the high level of civilian casualties remains a strong indication that violations of the prohibition on launching indiscriminate attacks and of the principles of proportionality and precaution are continuing. Children have been particularly affected by the fighting and, in some incidents, constituted the majority of the casualties.

11. Fighting continued to affect civilian infrastructure, including medical personnel and facilities, schools, markets and places of worship. On the basis of information received by OHCHR, civilian casualties, in possible violation of international humanitarian law, occurred in various governorates (see annex). OHCHR documented alleged incidents by many parties to the conflict, including government forces and their allies, non-State armed opposition groups and Security Council-designated terrorist groups.

12. The United States Department of Defense publicly confirmed that, in June, the international counter-ISIL coalition had carried out 870 strikes against ISIL targets in Raqqah, Hasakah, Dayr al-Zawr and Homs Governorates. Of those strikes, 637 were reported to have been in Raqqah Governorate. On 6 June, it announced the launch of an offensive to liberate Raqqah, with the coalition providing equipment, training, intelligence, logistics support, precision fires missiles and battlefield advice to the Syrian Democratic Forces.

13. The Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation issued statements on 9, 27 and 30 June, saying that it was continuing to support the Syrian Arab Republic in the fight against ISIL and the Nusrah Front. The statements also provided information on successes in the north-east of Aleppo Governorate, near Tadmur (Palmyra), and in the south of the country and on operations along the borders with Jordan and Iraq.

14. On 19 June, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard publicly announced that it had launched ballistic missiles against ISIL targets in eastern Dayr al-Zawr Governorate in response to the ISIL attack against the Iranian Parliament and the mausoleum of Ruhollah Khomeini in Tehran on 7 June.

15. The United Nations and health partners received credible reports of four attacks that affected health-care facilities and personnel in June, of which two have been verified and two are being verified. The two verified attacks were against health staff. On 6 June, a nurse working for a local hospital in Dar'a was killed, along with his son, when an air strike hit his home. On 17 June, a paramedic working for a hospital supported by national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) was reportedly killed by an air strike on his way to work.

16. Educational facilities continued to be affected. On 14 June, in the town of Tafas, in the western rural area of Dar'a, air strikes hit adjacent school buildings Shahid Keywan C1 and Shahid Najjar. At least 9 people, including two children, were killed and 25 injured in the attacks. The buildings were being used as shelters for internally displaced persons at the time. On 24 June, an NGO tent, used as a "safe learning place" in the Nakhla area of the city of Dar'a, was hit by an air strike, destroying the tent, damaging the desks and undermining the functioning of the facility.

Humanitarian access

Box 3
Key points for humanitarian access

(1) Some 13.5 million people in the Syrian Arab Republic, including 6.3 million internally displaced persons, remain in need of humanitarian assistance. An estimated 3.9 million people live in hard-to-reach areas and another 540,000 are currently besieged in 11 areas.

(2) With a convoy to east Harasta, Misraba and Mudayra on 17 June, one besieged area was reached through United Nations inter-agency cross-line operations during the reporting cycle, beyond Dayr al-Zawr (reached through airdrops). Two more inter-agency convoys were dispatched to hard-to-reach locations, reaching Talbisah and Tulul al-Humr on 15 June and Rastan on 22 June. Removal of medical supplies from the convoys remains a major challenge, with supplies sufficient for more than 84,000 treatments removed in June.

(3) As at the end of June, the United Nations had reached some 202,500 people under the June/July convoy plan, which constitutes 18 per cent of the 1,081,900 beneficiaries requested to be reached. Other inter-agency convoys could not proceed owing to a lack of approvals, including the lack of facilitation letters by the Syrian authorities; fighting and insecurity; and other administrative restrictions after initial approvals.

(4) Some 712,000 people received food assistance and hundreds of thousands received medical assistance, water and sanitation support, education support and other non-food items from the United Nations and partners through cross-border operations from Turkey and Jordan.

(5) The United Nations and partners continue to respond to the humanitarian impact of the fighting and insecurity in and around Raqqah, reaching more than 240,000 people with some form of assistance on a monthly basis. Humanitarian assistance includes various types of food and daily rations of bread, medicines and medical supplies, as well as nutrition supplies.

17. The delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in need remained extremely challenging in many areas as a result of active conflict, shifting conflict lines, administrative impediments and deliberate restrictions on the movement of people and goods by the parties to the conflict.

18. As a result of changes following the signing of local agreements, two locations — Madaya in Rif Dimashq Governorate and the Wa'r neighbourhood in the city of Homs — were removed from the list of besieged areas in June. Following an agreement reached as part of negotiations regarding the arrangement for the four towns of Fu'ah, Kafraya, Madaya and Zabadani, access has improved in Madaya. The United Nations conducted an assessment on 8 June and found that the 25,000-

30,000 civilians remaining in Madaya were able to move in and out of the town by public transportation and private vehicles. With regard to the Wa'r neighbourhood in the city of Homs, after reaching a local agreement in March, more than 19,000 people were evacuated from the area to Idlib, Jarabulus and northern rural Homs. On 20 May, the Governor of Homs announced that the evacuation process had been completed and that the area was again under government control, with an estimated 17,500 people remaining in the area. Although fewer areas are now besieged, the change is not wholly positive, as sieges are often lifted following the reaching of local agreements after periods of severe restrictions and heavy bombardment and those leaving besieged areas often move to other areas of the country where they continue to face hardship. The United Nations was not party to these local agreements.

19. There are now 11 besieged locations, with a total estimated population of 540,000 (see table 1). Of these, 7 are besieged by the Government (80 per cent of the total besieged population), 1 by both the Government and non-State armed opposition groups (1 per cent), 2 by non-State armed opposition groups (2 per cent) and 1 by ISIL (17 per cent).

Table 1
Besieged areas, June 2017

Governorate	*Location*	*Estimated population*	*Besieged by*
Dayr al-Zawr	Dayr al-Zawr	93 500	ISIL
Damascus	Yarmouk	9 800	Government forces and non-State armed opposition groups
Idlib	Fu'ah	12 100	Non-State armed opposition groups
	Kafraya		Non-State armed opposition groups
Rif Dimashq	Qabun and Barzah al-Balad	30 000	Government forces
	Duma area (Duma, Shaffuniyah, Hawsh al-Dawahirah)	150 100	Government forces
	Harasta area (Harasta, Mudayra, Misraba)	46 300	Government forces
	Irbin and surrounding area (Irbin, Zamalka and Jawbar)	49 300	Government forces
	Kafr Batna area (Kafr Batna, Ayn Tarma, Hammurah, Jisrayn, Saqba, Aftris, Hazzah, Hawsh al-Ash'ari, Bayt Siwa, Muhammadiyah)	132 400	Government forces
	Nashabiyah area (Nashabiyah, Bayt Nayim, Salhiyah, Utaya, Hazrama)	16 500	Government forces
Total		**540 000**	

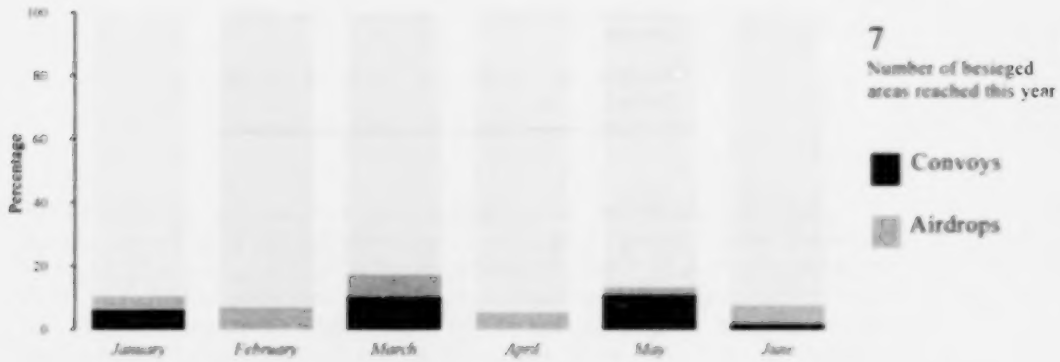
20. Access for the United Nations and its partners to those living in besieged and hard-to-reach locations remains a critical concern. Under the United Nations inter-agency convoy plan for June and July, access was requested to 27 locations,

including besieged areas, with the aim of reaching 1,081,900 people. Access to 836,750 beneficiaries (77.3 per cent) has been approved thus far. There were 3 locations to which access was approved in full, while access to another 23 was approved with either a lower number of beneficiaries in need than those identified by the United Nations or without a specified number of beneficiaries to be reached. One request was denied. Thus far, it has been possible to dispatch only three inter-agency convoys to besieged and hard-to-reach locations under the inter-agency convoy plan for June and July (see table 4).

21. Individual agencies continued to submit requests for single-agency deliveries to locations across the country. WFP submitted 1,587 official requests to obtain facilitation letters to transport food assistance to targeted locations across the country, while UNHCR submitted 84 such requests for the movement of core relief items and livelihoods kits, the large majority of which were approved. Both international and Syrian NGOs continued to perform needs assessments and provide support, including medical, education, psychosocial and protection services, in besieged and hard-to-reach locations, under extremely challenging circumstances and in accordance with humanitarian principles.

Figure II

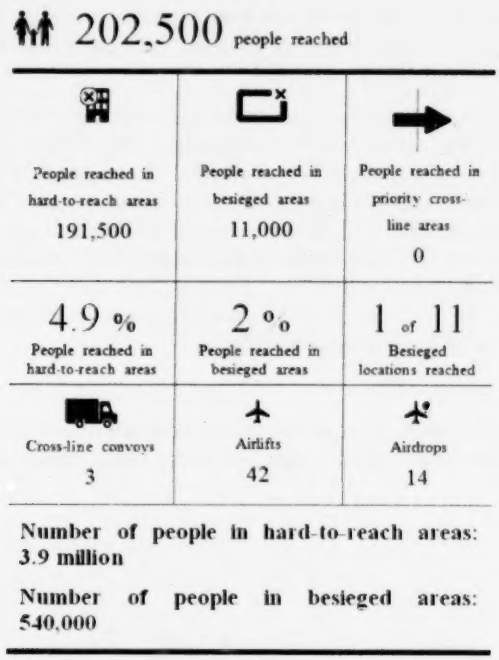
United Nations inter-agency cross-line humanitarian operations: percentage of people reached each month in besieged areas, including via airdrops to the city of Dayr al-Zawr



22. The majority of United Nations agencies and United Nations partners continue to be unable to reach populations in need in areas controlled by ISIL, as all plans to deliver assistance to those areas have been suspended owing to continued security concerns. This has prevented the United Nations and its humanitarian partners from reaching the city of Raqqah and most of Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, as well as pockets of northern rural Aleppo and north-western rural Hama.

23. With the opening of the land route to Qamishli, Hasakah and Raqqah Governorates became more easily accessible. Consequently, food for more than 190,000 people was dispatched to partners for distribution, achieving 100 per cent of the monthly plan for Hasakah Governorate. Moreover, the United Nations and its partners have been responding to the humanitarian needs of displaced persons affected by the hostilities in Raqqah Governorate. Humanitarian response efforts are taking place across Raqqah, Aleppo and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates, reaching more than 240,000 people with some form of assistance on a monthly basis. Humanitarian assistance includes various types of food and daily rations of bread, medicines and medical supplies, as well as nutrition supplies.

Figure III
United Nations inter-agency cross-line humanitarian operations by land, June 2017



24. Life-saving and life-sustaining medical items sufficient for more than 84,000 treatments were removed from inter-agency convoys in June by the Syrian authorities (see table 2). Additional medical supplies were scheduled to be delivered as part of the monthly inter-agency convoy plan, but only three convoys have been able to proceed thus far during the June/July cycle. Furthermore, since the beginning of 2017, the World Health Organization (WHO) has submitted nine single-agency requests to the Government to have access to 12 locations in six governorates. The Government approved three requests, five remain unanswered and one has been rejected.

Table 2
Medical supplies removed from humanitarian convoys in June 2017

Location	*Number of treatments*	*Type of supplies*
East Harasta, Misraba and Mudayra	8 895	Phenobarbitone, amitriptyline hydrochloride, haloperidol, gastro-resistant sodium valproate, ketamine hydrochloride, diagnostic ultrasound system, gelofusine, carbamazepine, beclomethasone nasal spray, atracurium
Talbisah and Tulul al-Humr	53 948	Latex examination gloves (small), minor surgery instruments and surgical kits, stainless steel instruments for minor surgery, heparine sodium, salbutamol, electrocardiograph, salbutamol sulphate inhaler, budesonide inhalation (aerosol), beclomethasone dipropionate, inhalation (aerosol), pneumonia type A kits (P97-023), ketorolac tromethamine, normal saline,

Location	*Number of treatments*	*Type of supplies*
		glucose 5 per cent, injection solution with IV giving set and needle
Rastan	21 238	Minor surgery instruments and surgical kits, stainless steel instruments for minor surgery, M7 diagnostic ultrasound system, beclomethasone dipropionate nasal spray, carbamazepine, pneumonia type A kits (P97-023), ketorolac tromethamine, normal saline with IV giving set, glucose 5 per cent, injection solution with IV giving set and needle

25. In June, WFP and UNHCR were able to successfully deploy a convoy from Aleppo through Manbij to Qamishli in Hasakah Governorate (see box 2). This important development will allow the United Nations to deliver at scale to the north-east of the country, an area that has required expensive airlifts as a result of the temporary closure of the Nusaybin/Qamishli crossing point with Turkey since December 2015.

26. Following the resumption of these regular land deliveries, the United Nations airlift operations launched in July 2016 to Qamishly were phased out on 25 June. By then, 533 rotations had been completed, airlifting 18,857 tons of food and other supplies, reaching some 400,000 people. In June alone, 42 rotations were completed, enabling the United Nations to dispatch food and other assistance to partners for 393,300 people living in parts of Hasakah, Raqqah and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates.

Humanitarian response

27. In June, United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners continued to reach millions of people in need through all modalities from within the Syrian Arab Republic and across its borders (see table 3). In addition, NGOs continued to deliver life-saving assistance. The Government continued to provide basic services to areas under its control and in many areas beyond its control. Local authorities in many areas controlled by non-State armed opposition groups also continued to provide services when possible.

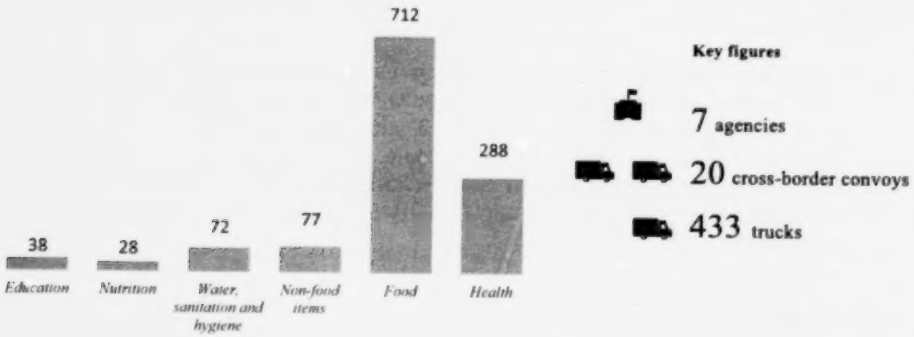
Table 3
People reached by the United Nations and other organizations, June 2017

Organization	*Number of people reached*
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	36 858
International Organization for Migration	130 000
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	231 991
United Nations Children's Fund	>1 500 000
United Nations Development Programme	3 868 669
United Nations Population Fund	29 000
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	>250 000
World Food Programme	>4 000 0000
World Health Organization	1 633 765

28. Cross-border deliveries continued from Turkey and Jordan into the Syrian Arab Republic under the terms of Security Council resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016) (see fig. IV). In line with those resolutions, the United Nations notified the Syrian authorities in advance of each shipment, including content, destination and number of beneficiaries. The United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic continued its operations, monitoring 433 trucks used in 20 convoys by seven United Nations entities in June, confirming the humanitarian nature of each and notifying the Syrian authorities after each shipment. The Mechanism continued to benefit from the excellent cooperation of the Governments of Jordan and Turkey.

Figure IV
Beneficiaries assisted by the United Nations and its partners per cluster through cross-border humanitarian deliveries, June 2017

(Thousands)



29. In June, WFP carried out 14 high-altitude airdrop rotations in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, dropping food rations sufficient for 31,035 people and supplies from other humanitarian actors.

Table 4
Inter-agency cross-line humanitarian convoys, June 2017

Date	*Location*	*Requested target (number of beneficiaries)*	*Number of beneficiaries reached*	*Type of assistance*
15 June	Talbisah and Tulul al-Humr	101,000	84 000	Multisectoral
19 June	East Harasta, Misraba and Mudayra	33 000	11 000	Multisectoral
21/22 June	Rastan	107 500	107 500	Multisectoral

30. The total number of confirmed polio cases had reached 17 by 21 June, with 16 cases reported in the Mayadeen district in Dayr al-Zawr and 1 in Raqqah. The Ministry of Health, with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and WHO, implemented a first round of polio vaccinations on 22 June, reaching hundreds of thousands of children. Moreover, between late May and early June, UNICEF and WHO conducted a measles immunization campaign for children between the ages of 7 months and 5 years, reaching more than 1.7 million children.

31. On 22 June, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) concluded a second round of cash assistance for 2017, which had begun on 2 May, benefiting 409,547 Palestine refugees (122,576 families) across the Syrian Arab Republic. UNRWA also distributed food

parcels to 143,188 Palestine refugees and provided health treatments to 46,329 patients (18,991 men and 27,338 women) across the country.

32. Throughout the month, the Russian Federation sent information bulletins to the United Nations from the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic, which outlined the provision of bilateral relief assistance. Other Member States also continued to provide bilateral and other forms of humanitarian assistance.

Visas and registrations

33. A total of 30 new United Nations visa requests were submitted to the Government in June, of which 14 were approved and 16 remain outstanding. Of the new visa applications submitted in earlier months, a further 12 were approved in June, 1 was rejected and 21 remain pending. A total of 64 United Nations visa renewal requests were submitted in June, of which 40 were approved and 24 remain pending. A further 14 visa renewals submitted in earlier months were also approved, while 15 remain pending.

34. A total of 22 international NGOs are registered with the Government to operate in the country. Four international NGOs are completing registration. Those organizations continued to face administrative hurdles and restrictions affecting their ability to operate, including in gaining permission to undertake independent needs assessments. Some 217 national NGOs are authorized by the Syrian Arab Republic to partner with the United Nations.

Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and premises

35. On 17 June, an inter-agency convoy to east Harasta, Misraba and Mudayra in Rif Dimashq Governorate came under sniper fire, even though all deconfliction measures were in place between the Russian Federation and the international counter-ISIL coalition and the necessary approvals and guarantees of safe passage had been received from relevant parties on the ground. The attack injured a Syrian Arab Red Crescent driver, while another was hurt by a bullet but not seriously injured. No party has claimed responsibility for the attack, which, if directed intentionally against the humanitarian convoy and its personnel, constitutes a war crime.

36. On 15 June, dozens of protesters set fire to a police station in the city of Suwayda' in retaliation for the detention of a political activist. The demonstrations continued for two days before some leaders in the area intervened to calm the situation. On 18 June, an improvised explosive device detonated on Siyahah Street in the city of Qamishli, some 300 m from the UNHCR office, causing material damage. All UNHCR staff members were safe. The threat of improvised explosive devices and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices is likely to persist, given the fighting in southern Hasakah and the ongoing offensive in Raqqah.

37. Since the beginning of the conflict, dozens of humanitarian workers have been killed, including 21 staff members of the United Nations, 17 of whom were UNRWA staff members, 65 staff members and volunteers of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and eight staff members and volunteers of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. In addition, many staff members of international and national NGOs are reported to have been killed.

38. A total of 28 United Nations staff members, comprising 1 United Nations Development Programme staff member and 27 UNRWA staff members, are detained or missing.

III. Observations

39. With 13.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance across the Syrian Arab Republic, the humanitarian crisis continues in most areas. The conflict continues to kill civilians and further destroy basic infrastructure. Access to health care, food, clean water and education continues to pose significant challenges to civilians. In too many cases, civilians risk their lives, adopting negative coping mechanisms to address their basic needs.

40. The United Nations and its humanitarian partners provide an essential lifeline to those in need. The deployment of cross-border assistance, ongoing airdrops to Dayr al-Zawr, the recent opening of a land route to Qamishli and the constant efforts to reach areas across conflict lines are all examples of the vital humanitarian work of the United Nations and its partners and adaptability to reach civilians trapped by the conflict. The opening of some ISIL-held areas to humanitarian assistance is a positive development. Nevertheless, too many civilians remain out of reach, despite all efforts. In particular, the 540,000 people who are besieged face dire circumstances. I call upon all parties to immediately end sieges so as to allow sustained humanitarian access and freedom of movement to those currently trapped. I remind all parties that the deliberate starvation of civilians as a method of warfare constitutes a serious violation of international humanitarian law and could amount to a war crime.

41. I remain deeply troubled by the situation on the ground for many civilians who suffer from the ongoing conflict. Explosive weapons continue to be fired into populated areas, indiscriminately killing and injuring civilians. I continue to reiterate my call for the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic to be referred to the International Criminal Court. I also call upon all Member States to support the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

42. The escalation of hostilities in the east and north-east is of particular concern, as the ongoing military operations against ISIL take their toll on civilians. This has come at the cost of civilian lives and, in some cases, the destruction of vital infrastructure. I reiterate my call upon all those conducting military operations in the Syrian Arab Republic to do so in compliance with international humanitarian law, in particular as it relates to the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure. All efforts must be made to include a humanitarian concept of operations in all military planning.

43. It is crucial that the de-escalation of violence be achieved in the Syrian Arab Republic. I welcome the continued and persistent efforts of the guarantors in the Astana process towards de-escalation, the challenges and difficulties notwithstanding. Their efforts have resulted in a reduction of violence in some areas, but I remain concerned about the escalation of violence in Dar'a and eastern Ghutah. The reduction of violence must also hold in all four de-escalation areas and be further expanded. The creation of de-escalation areas must result in a sustained increase in humanitarian access. Such an increase was not seen in June. Further progress on issues regarding detainees and missing persons, and humanitarian demining, are also important. While also acknowledging the promise of de-escalation areas to reduce violence, I urge all countries to preserve the right of all Syrians to seek asylum and enjoy refugee protection until conditions are conducive for voluntary return in safety and in dignity.

44. Ultimately, the political process is the only course that can offer a lasting solution to the Syrian conflict and an end to the tremendous suffering of the people.

There is no military solution. The Geneva and Astana processes can complement each other, as the formal United Nations-facilitated intra-Syrian negotiations can be enabled by more conducive conditions on the ground as a result of the de-escalation efforts by the Astana guarantors. I fully support the continued efforts of my Special Envoy for Syria through the intra-Syrian talks and I urge the Syrian parties to constructively address the four baskets, namely, governance issues, constitutional issues, electoral issues and issues relating to counter-terrorism and security governance. I remind the international community of the importance of fully implementing all relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 2254 (2015) and 2268 (2016).

Annex

Incidents affecting civilians recorded by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, June 2017[1]

Rif Dimashq and Damascus Governorates

- On 1 June, ground-based strikes hit the opposition-controlled area of Irbin, which reportedly resulted in the death of a woman.
- On 2 June, a civilian was allegedly shot in the opposition-held area of Mudayra while travelling towards Duma.
- Also on 2 June, a ground-based strike hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Ash'ari, allegedly killing a child and severely injuring a woman and her daughter who were displaced from Shub'ah.
- On 6 June, a ground-based strike hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Harasta, reportedly killing a boy and injuring several members in his family including his brother, mother and grandmother.
- Also on 6 June, a ground-based strike hit a residential building in Harasta, which reportedly killed a woman and injured her son.
- On 23 June, two successive air strikes hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Hazzah. The second air strike hit a building located in the vicinity of a local market and reportedly resulted in the death of 5 civilians, including three children, two from the same family, and the injury of at least 12 others, including women and children.

Dar'a Governorate

- On 1 June, two improvised explosive devices exploded on a road between Kafr Shams and Aqraba, hitting a convoy of opposition fighters. As both civilians and fighters came to provide assistance to the wounded, two ground strikes hit the location again, reportedly killing seven people, including three civilians from Kafr Shams, and injuring at least 10 other civilians.
- Also on 1 June, air strikes hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Dera'a camp, reportedly killing two civilians, including a boy from a family previously displaced from Qunaytirah.
- On 3 June, several ground-based strikes hit residential areas in government-controlled Dar'a, including Dar'a al-Mahattah, Sabil, Kashif and Sahhari, reportedly killing a civilian and leaving an unknown number injured.
- On 4 June, two civilians were allegedly killed and several others wounded in ground-based strikes that hit a residential area in the opposition-controlled village of Tafas.

[1] In line with Security Council resolution 2258 (2015), the present description of developments on the ground, and the incidents during the month that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been able to corroborate, relates to the compliance with Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) by all parties in the Syrian Arab Republic. The information is provided without prejudice to the work of the Task Force on the Ceasefire of the International Syria Support Group. The reporting is not a comprehensive listing of all violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of international human rights law that took place in the Syrian Arab Republic during the reporting period.

- Also on 4 June, four air strikes hit a residential area in the town of Ghariyah al-Gharbiyah. The attack allegedly killed two women and injured an unknown number of others.
- On 5 June, two air strikes reportedly hit a former government military facility being used to house internally displaced persons in Tafas, resulting in the death of seven civilians, including three internally displaced persons from Uthman, including a boy and a girl.
- Around 5 June, two successive air strikes hit a vehicle carrying civilians on the road between Tafas and Da'il, allegedly killing six, including a child.
- On 5 June, ground-based strikes hit a residential area in government-controlled Dar'a al-Mahattah, reportedly killing a girl and severely injuring a male civilian who then died the following day.
- On 7 June, air strikes hit a residential area in the opposition-controlled area of Tariq al-Sadd in the city of Dar'a, reportedly killing three civilians, including a man and a girl from a family previously displaced from Dar'a al-Balad.
- On 9 June, air strikes hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Dar'a al-Balad, reportedly killing a civilian and injuring an unknown number of others.
- On 10 June, ground-based strikes hit opposition-controlled Nasib, which resulted in the alleged death of a civilian male and his two children (a boy and a girl) and a grave injury to another boy from the same family who then died the following day.
- On 13 June, two civilians were reportedly killed and another severely injured when an improvised explosive device detonated on the road between opposition-controlled Da'il and Nawa. All three victims were internally displaced persons from the same family previously displaced from Tall Shihab.
- On the morning of 14 June, two air strikes hit a residential area in Tafas, allegedly damaging a school that served as a shelter for internally displaced persons from Dar'a Governorate. Eight civilians displaced from Uthman, including a girl and two women, in addition to a civilian from Tafas, were killed and an unknown number injured.
- Also on 14 June, ground-based strikes hit a residential area of Tafas, reportedly killing two civilians, one of whom was a girl.
- On 22 June, air strikes hit an informal settlement for internally displaced persons in Nasib, reportedly killing three civilians previously displaced from the Yarmouk Valley, in addition to leaving an unknown number of civilians injured.
- On 23 June, ground-based strikes hit a residential area in the government-controlled Kashif neighbourhood of Dar'a city, reportedly killing two civilians, one of whom was a woman.
- On 24 June, air strikes hit the town of Nasib between noon and 5.30 p.m., causing material damage and injuring internally displaced persons in the area.
- Also on 24 June, air strikes hit an informal settlement for internally displaced persons located near a market in Nasib, reportedly killing two civilians previously displaced from Dar'a al-Balad, one of whom was a woman. Another civilian severely injured in the strike allegedly died on 29 June.
- On 27 June, ground-based strikes hit a residential area near the Shahid al-Fakhouri School in opposition-controlled Harah, reportedly killing six

civilians, including a woman and four girls from a single family. At least 12 civilians, 5 of whom were children, were reportedly injured in the attack.

Aleppo Governorate

- On 18 June, a civilian was reportedly killed and two girls were injured as a result of ground-based strikes on the opposition-held town of Mari' in the northern rural area of the governorate.
- On 19 June, a civilian was allegedly killed and four others were injured when ground-based strikes hit the town of Mari'.

Idlib Governorate

- On 1 June, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in the town of Bdama, in rural Jisr al-Shughur, reportedly injuring a civilian.
- On 8 June, heavy armed clashes broke out in populated areas of the city of Ma'arrat al-Nu'man and allegedly resulted in the death of a 50-year-old street vendor.
- On 14 June, ground-based strikes hit residential areas on the outskirts of the city of Jisr al-Shughur, reportedly injuring four civilians, including a mother and her child.
- During the afternoon of 24 June, a car bomb exploded near a market in the city of Dana, north-east of Idlib, reportedly killing 7 civilians, including three children, and injuring at least 30 more.

Hama Governorate

- In the early morning of 5 June, air strikes hit the ISIL-held village of Abu Hawadid in the Uqayribat sub-district of eastern rural Hama, reportedly injuring a male civilian previously displaced from Talbisah in northern rural Homs and causing extensive material damage.
- In the early morning of 7 June, air strikes hit ISIL-held eastern Suha, reportedly killing a pregnant woman and her two children.
- On 15 June, ground-based strikes hit a residential area in the city of Lataminah in opposition-controlled northern rural Hama, reportedly injuring a child.
- On 17 June, air strikes hit a market in the ISIL-held village of Nu'aymah, located 2 km east of Uqayribat, reportedly killing at least three civilians and injuring others.
- On 22 June, ground-based strikes hit residential areas around Uqayribat, reportedly killing a male civilian and causing significant material damage. The strikes also reportedly resulted in the displacement of civilians.

Homs Governorate

- On 13 June, a 13-year-old boy was killed and another severely injured following the explosion of remnants of a cluster bomb in the village of Izz al-Din, in Talbisah in rural northern Homs.
- On 21 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the town of Kafr Laha, located in the area of Hula, reportedly killing a male civilian and injuring five other civilians.

- On 29 June, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Talbisah, reportedly killing a female nurse and injuring at least five civilians, including a man whose hand was severed.
- Also on 29 June, a 40-year-old male civilian was shot in the head and killed while riding his motorcycle on the road linking the village of Ghantu to Talbisah.

Dayr al-Zawr Governorate

- On 1 June, ground-based strikes hit the government-controlled neighbourhoods of Qusur and Jurah in Dayr al-Zawr, allegedly killing two male civilians.
- On 4 June, air strikes hit the town of Muhsin in eastern rural Dayr al-Zawr and allegedly killed at least three civilians, including a girl and woman, and injured at least four others.
- On 7 June, air strikes hit a civilian vehicle travelling through the town of Qurayya in eastern rural Dayr al-Zawr, allegedly killing at least eight civilians and injuring four others.
- On 8 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the town of Ayyash, reportedly killing at least 3 civilians and injuring 10 others.
- On 9 June, at least one civilian was allegedly killed and three others were injured as a result of ground-based strikes on the Qusur and Jurah neighbourhoods of the city of Dayr al-Zawr.
- Also on 9 June, air strikes in the vicinity of a mosque in the village of Jadid Uqaydat allegedly killed 5 civilians and injured 11 others.
- On 10 June, a child and a woman were allegedly killed as a result of ground-based strikes that hit residential areas in the Qusur neighbourhood of the city of Dayr al-Zawr.
- On 15 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the village of Marrat, eastern Dayr al-Zawr, reportedly killing seven civilians, including four children and a woman.
- Also on 15 June, at least six civilians, including a woman and three children, were allegedly killed and at least four others injured as a result of air strikes on the village of Hatla, in the eastern rural area of Dayr al-Zawr.
- On 17 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the city of Mayadin, eastern Dayr al-Zawr, reportedly killing five civilians, including two children and a woman, and injuring at least seven others.
- During the afternoon of 20 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the village of Khusham, eastern Dayr al-Zawr, allegedly killing at least 14 civilians, including at least two women and two children, and injuring no fewer than 7 others.
- On 23 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the village of Muhaymidah, in the western rural part of Dayr al-Zawr, reportedly killing at least 11 civilians, including seven children and two women.
- On 24 June, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in the Qusur and Jurah neighbourhoods of Dayr al-Zawr city, reportedly killing at least five civilians and injuring several others.
- On 25 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the village of Muhsin, eastern Dayr al-Zawr, allegedly killing four children and their mother.

- Also on 25 June, a woman and child were reportedly killed when air strikes hit their home in the town of Qurayya in the eastern rural part of Dayr al-Zawr.
- At dawn on 26 June, air strikes hit and completely destroyed an ISIL-run place of detention located near a bridge in the town of Mayadin. Reports received indicated that at least 40 people, including ISIL members, had been killed in the strike.

Raqqah Governorate

- On 1 June, a male civilian was allegedly killed by a landmine north of the city of Raqqah.
- On 3 June, air strikes hit a residential area close to Jisr al-Jadid, south of the city of Raqqah, reportedly killing at least eight civilians, including a child, and injuring at least five others.
- Also on 3 June, at least 15 civilians were allegedly killed and 8 others injured when air strikes hit residential areas behind the Shira' swimming pool in the city of Raqqah.
- On 5 June, air strikes hit a boat that was reportedly carrying civilians from the northern to the southern banks of the Euphrates River. The boat was reportedly hit while it was at the southern access side of the city of Raqqah, allegedly killing 9 civilians and injuring at least 10 others.
- On 6 June, a man and his wife and their three children were allegedly killed when air strikes hit a residential building in the centre of the city of Raqqah.
- On 7 June, two children were reportedly killed when a landmine exploded close to them in the village of Ja'bar, in the west of the governorate.
- On 8 June, five children were allegedly killed when a landmine exploded in the village of Bougha in northern rural Raqqah. On the same day, two civilians were reportedly killed when a landmine exploded in the city of Tabaqah.
- Also on 8 June, air strikes hit the city of Raqqah, including the Mafraq al-Jazra neighbourhood on the west side of the city. At least 14 civilians were allegedly killed.
- On 10 June, at least 15 civilians, including four women and six children, were reportedly killed in air strikes that hit residential areas on Nur Street in Dariya, in the west of the governorate.
- Also on 10 June, ground-based strikes again hit residential areas in Dariya and allegedly killed at least two women and two children.
- Also on 10 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the Mukhtalatah area of the Sina'a neighbourhood, in the east of the city of Raqqah, reportedly killing at least six civilians, four of whom were children and two women.
- Also on 10 June, air strikes hit residential areas and reportedly killed seven civilians, including a woman, in the western neighbourhoods of Jazrah and Sabahiyah in the city of Raqqah.
- On 12 June, four civilians, including at least three children, were allegedly killed as a result of ground-based strikes on the Sayf al-Dawlah neighbourhood in the city of Raqqah.
- On 13 June, four civilians from one family, including two children, were allegedly killed when air strikes hit their home in the Qasr al-Banat area in the city of Raqqah.

- On 14 June, four civilians, including a woman, were reportedly killed as a result of ground-based strikes on the Sab' Bahrat area in the city of Raqqah.
- On 15 June, a woman and her four children were allegedly killed when air strikes hit their home in the village of Kasrat al-Shaykh Jum'ah in the rural west of the governorate.
- Also on 15 June, air strikes hit residential areas close to the non-operational Khalid Ibn al-Walid School in the Intifadah neighbourhood of the western part of the city of Raqqah, allegedly killing at least four civilians from one family, including a woman and her three children. On the same day, ground-based strikes hit residential areas and reportedly killed at least 7 civilians and injured no fewer than 14 others in the city.
- On 16 June, three civilians, including a woman and a girl, were killed as a result of ground-based strikes in the vicinity of the Nur mosque area in the city of Raqqah.
- On 18 June, two women and two children were reportedly killed and at least three other civilians injured as a result of ground-based strikes on the Badu neighbourhood in the city of Raqqah.
- On 19 June, two children were allegedly killed and seven civilians injured when air strikes hit close to the Imam al-Nawawi mosque in the city of Raqqah.
- On 21 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the Nur mosque neighbourhood of the city of Raqqah and reportedly killed at least 18 civilians and injured no fewer than 11 others. On the same day, ground-based strikes hit the city and reportedly killed at least 9 civilians and injured no fewer than 17 others.
- Also on 21 June, at least 10 civilians were reportedly killed and 3 others injured when air strikes hit residential areas in the Amn al-Dawlah neighbourhood of the city of Raqqah.
- On 24 June, at least eight civilians were reportedly killed when air strikes hit residential areas in the Rumaylah neighbourhood of the city of Raqqah.
- Also on 24 June, air strikes hit a residential house in the Nahdah neighbourhood of the city of Raqqah and reportedly killed five civilians, including a woman.
- On 25 June, three civilians were allegedly killed when an air strike hit their vehicle as it was travelling alongside the River Euphrates, south of the city of Raqqah.

Hasakah Governorate

- On 17 June, the Syrian Defence Forces reportedly held seven civilians for forced recruitment in the village of Harmun in rural Hasakah.
- On 19 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the village of Tall al-Jayir, located in the eastern Shadi area bordering Iraq, and reportedly killed at least 12 civilians.

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Letter dated 18 July 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Sweden and Uruguay, as Co-Chairs of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security, and in close cooperation with the United Kingdom, hereby share a summary note of the meeting held on 14 June 2017 on women and peace and security in Iraq (see annex).

We would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Olof **Skoog**
Ambassador

(*Signed*) Matthew **Rycroft**
Ambassador

(*Signed*) Elbio **Rosselli**
Ambassador

17-12417 (E) 270717

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Annex to the letter dated 18 July 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security

Summary of the meeting on Iraq, 14 June 2017

On 14 June, the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security held its third meeting on women and peace and security in Iraq. The members received a briefing from the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq and representatives of UNAMI and the United Nations country team.

The meeting was held as the Iraqi security forces, supported by a coalition of more than 60 Member States, were on the brink of defeating Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Mosul in the largest urban battle since the Second World War and was focused on the abuses committed against women and girls, from being used as human shields and executed in public to being abducted, enslaved and sold or relocated to the Syrian Arab Republic, and the overall regression in women's rights and women's empowerment in the cities occupied by ISIL, marked by a rigid enforcement of sex segregation and an increase in early marriage and intimate partner violence. In more than 20 displacement sites surrounding Mosul, women and girls are now vulnerable to sexual harassment, stigmatization and family separation when their husbands and sons are taken into detention centres. More than 90 per cent of camp management committees in camps for internally displaced persons lack female representation.

The participation of women in national reconciliation, especially in the continuing discussions on a national settlement, remains low, despite continued advocacy, ongoing engagement with the gender office of the National Reconciliation Committee and efforts to include young women in youth committees and round tables organized in recent months. Important initiatives, including the five-year parliamentary initiative for community peace in Ninawa, led by female parliamentarians and focused on social peace and community reconciliation, need political backing and financial support. Women's organizations struggle to find space and to influence decision-making in a context dominated by military and religious actors. There are limited opportunities for women within political parties, and the United Nations has expressed concern that the participation of women as voters and candidates in upcoming elections will be low in areas that were occupied by ISIL. In the process of selecting new commissioners for the Independent High Electoral Commission, only seven women have been included in a shortlist of 118 candidates. International partners can assist in the implementation of the national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which continues to lack funding and even a line item in the national budget, by supporting the response and resilience programme for Iraq and joint programmes on security sector reform, preventing violent extremism and reintegration and services for survivors.

During the second official visit to Iraq of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the Government showed its political will and commitment to implement the joint communiqué on the prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence signed in September 2016. Focal points at the federal and regional levels have already been appointed, an

interministerial task force is being formed and the Government has repeatedly acknowledged the need for special efforts and specific legislation for survivors of sexual violence and children born of rape. Following the positive statements by religious leaders in Iraq on the reintegration of survivors of sexual violence and their children, a national conference in July will focus on this issue. The work of several United Nations agencies was highlighted, especially the importance of the United Nations Population Fund specialized mobile teams and hospitals with maternity wings around Mosul, which are aimed at highly vulnerable women as soon as they cross the front line. However, shelters run by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) continue to lack the legal coverage required to operate; none are active in southern and central Iraq and only three are operating in the Kurdistan region. The draft family protection act has been under discussion by the Council of Representatives for several years, and the Penal Code still permits "honour" as mitigation for crimes of violence committed against family members. Other issues highlighted included the marked contrast between the positive statements by religious leaders and the lack of acceptance of children born of rape among all communities, the critical need to scale up multisectoral services for survivors and the importance of holding those responsible for enslaving and trafficking women and girls to account. Action that could be taken in that regard included the designation of individuals by the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities and making full use of the mandate of Security Council resolution 2331 (2016) on the links between violent extremism, trafficking and conflict-related sexual violence. In its resolution 2299 (2016), the Council expressed its readiness to sanction individuals or groups for trafficking in persons, the sale of women and girls and forced marriage, among other violations, and made repeated calls for accountability that have not yet been met.

The representative of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, as the secretariat of the Informal Expert Group, noted that several recommendations highlighted at the previous meeting had been taken forward. United Nations reports and briefings to the Security Council had included stronger information and analysis on women and peace and security, as well as regular updates on the Organization's ongoing efforts, including by its senior leadership, to advocate women's inclusion in decision-making about stabilization, recovery and national reconciliation. The Government had established a new directorate-general on women's empowerment following the abolishment of the Ministry of Women's Affairs in 2015, and the capacity of UNAMI had been strengthened by the recruitment of a Senior Women's Protection Adviser, as called for in resolution 2299 (2016). However, it was crucial for the mandate of UNAMI on gender equality issues to be reiterated and reinforced during discussions on its renewal. Elements and recommendations for special consideration were shared with members of the Security Council. They included urging the Government to ensure that it took the lead with regard to the joint communiqué and national action plan and had adequate capacity and leverage and that effective mechanisms existed for civil society to monitor the implementation of those instruments; the provision of increased political, legal and financial support to women's civil society organizations and women's human rights defenders; the promotion of the representation and participation of women in upcoming elections and electoral bodies; and the inclusion of core dedicated capacity on women's protection in the Mission's regular budget. In addition, the international community should demand that United Nations joint programmes on economic recovery, reconciliation, transitional justice, civil documentation, front-line service delivery, deradicalization and prevention of violent extremism, disarmament and reintegration and security

sector reform earmark allocations for the integration of a gender perspective into their work. The United Nations should coordinate the development of a countrywide joint programme on conflict-related sexual violence, building and expanding on current projects by agencies, with the support of international partners.

The United Nations pledged to focus over the coming months on ensuring a leading role of women in reconciliation; reintegration assistance for women survivors; protection from sexual exploitation, harassment, violence and trafficking by security actors and in displacement sites; and continuing to advocate and support the adoption of the draft family protection act with provisions to allow NGOs to operate shelters for women and other vulnerable individuals fleeing violence. In the meantime, a government directive providing similar legal coverage for national NGOs and eliminating access barriers, such as the need for a court order for entry or release into a shelter, was urgently needed.

Lastly, upon the request of the Co-Chairs, the representatives of UNAMI reported on the Mission's current expertise on gender and women's protection, the Mission's gender balance, which stood at 20 per cent, and its coordination mechanisms, which centred around a very active gender task force that included all United Nations agencies in Iraq and sometimes international NGOs. A working group on gender for donors and international partners was being established.

The Co-Chairs expressed thanks to those who had briefed the Informal Expert Group for participating in the meeting and committed themselves to following up on the recommendations, especially in the context of the renewal of the mandate of UNAMI, and to reconvene in 2018.

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Security Council

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21 July 2017

Original: English

Letter dated 18 July 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Sweden and Uruguay, as Co-Chairs of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security, and in close cooperation with the United Kingdom, hereby share a summary note of the meeting held on 27 February 2017 on the Lake Chad basin crisis (see annex).

We would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Olof **Skoog**
Ambassador

(*Signed*) Matthew **Rycroft**
Ambassador

(*Signed*) Elbio **Rosselli**
Ambassador

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Annex to the letter dated 18 July 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security

Summary of the meeting on the Lake Chad basin crisis, 27 February 2017

On 27 February, the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security held its first meeting of 2017 to discuss the Lake Chad basin crisis, ahead of the five-day visiting mission by the Security Council to Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria. The members received a briefing from the United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria and representatives of the United Nations country team, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa.

The members were particularly interested in the United Nations approach to the demobilization and reintegration of women and girls coming out of association with Boko Haram; the need to ensure that any accountability initiatives were responsive to women and girls, including following up on allegations of sexual abuse in camps for internally displaced persons; the extent of the United Nations regular engagement with women's civil society organizations on peace and security matters, in particular early warning, national and regional counter-terrorism efforts and efforts to prevent violent extremism; United Nations views on current discussions on durable solutions for forcibly displaced persons and how their return, whether forced or voluntary, was managed; the extent of support to the Governments in the region to develop or implement national action plans on women and peace and security and to train security forces to prevent and respond to sexual violence; and the current capacity of the United Nations field presence to work on gender equality in the context of the crisis, coordinate among the various parts of the Organization and ensure that the leadership took up those issues in its interactions with the key decision makers.

The presenters highlighted that the correlation between the sharp gender inequalities and the conflict in the region went beyond the abduction of some 7,000 women and girls by Boko Haram, including the well-publicized kidnapping of the Chibok schoolgirls, and the increasing use of female suicide bombers by the terrorist group. The areas affected by the conflict had vastly different rates of fertility, maternal mortality, girls' enrolment in education and representation of women in political life.

Nigeria had a national action plan on women and peace and security and the other countries in the region were at various stages of developing and adopting similar plans. A recent review of the Nigerian national action plan, however, had revealed gaps and weaknesses. It did not, for example, take into consideration some issues that subsequently emerged as inherent to the conflict, from violent extremism to post-conflict demobilization and reintegration. Relevant stakeholders were not familiar with the plan and the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development had had difficulties in coordinating with or obtaining information from other key ministries. The lack of resources allocated to those national plans continued to hamper their implementation. The presenters emphasized the need for national and regional actors to make better use of women mediators, noting that, in Nigeria, the Ministry had been included among the key entities in the interministerial task force assigned to coordinate the Government's response to the humanitarian emergency. Recently, the United Nations had supported efforts to deploy women among the

human rights monitors in the affected areas and the Government had responded to allegations of sexual and gender-based violence in camps for internally displaced persons by deploying 100 female police officers to help to curb and address those abuses and ensure better access to services by victims of sexual violence.

With regard to prevention and early warning, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel had been working with the Gender Development Centre of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), whose second regional action plan on women and peace and security had been launched on 10 February, in order to introduce indicators to monitor sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking in persons and other gender-related incidents and to include that information in the quarterly reports of the ECOWAS early warning system. Civil society organizations contributed to the collection of that information, but were systematically underresourced. There was also a lack of synergy between some of the largest women's networks in the region, such as the Mano River Women's Peace Network, the Network on Peace and Security for Women in the ECOWAS Region and the Sahel Women Platform.

The challenges in protecting women and girls were alarming. On one hand, there were thousands of women who had been victims of abductions, sexual slavery, forced recruitment, forced labour, forced marriage and other abuses but, on the other, many victims were unwilling to return to their communities because of stigma or suffered secondary displacement because they could not gain access to their communities when they attempted to return or lacked access to the most basic services. One main issue with the reintegration of former combatants or persons associated with Boko Haram was that many children, some under 5 years of age, were detained for "screening" in deplorable conditions because their mothers, many of them adolescent girls themselves, were also detained. The Civilian Joint Task Force in Nigeria had been listed alongside Boko Haram in the annexes to the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict because of its recruitment of children. The Government had begun to provide greater access to detention and transit sites and to collaborate with international actors on ensuring adequate treatment, interrogation, release and family tracing and reunification. In the past year in Nigeria, there had been 43 cases of sexual violence allegedly perpetrated by security guards, army officers, camp officials, members of the Civilian Joint Task Force and vigilantes. In December 2016, nine officers reportedly had been arrested and were currently standing trial. Just 2 per cent of the survivors of gender-based violence who sought medical care were able to gain access to it. In addition, it was estimated that almost half of all survivors declined to report sexual violence. In camps for internally displaced persons, women and girls often felt uncomfortable reporting to National Emergency Management Agency representatives, who were generally men.

Recommendations by the participants and the secretariat of the Group included:

(a) Request that the report on the visit by the Security Council include details on the role of women and gender analysis in the response to the crisis and raise those issues not only in meetings with women's groups, but also in meetings with all key interlocutors;

(b) Suggest stronger language on broader women and peace and security issues in subsequent outcome documents of the deliberations of the Security Council on the region;

(c) Solicit information from the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council, such as the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh),

Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, on the integration of a gender perspective, for example in their visits, assessments, technical support and listings of individuals;

(d) Ensure that special political missions covering the countries in the region include more detailed information and analysis on women and peace and security in their briefings to the Security Council;

(e) Ensure that national and regional strategies recognize survivors of sexual violence as victims of terrorism, so that they would benefit from the appropriate assistance;

(f) Highlight the need for support and reinforcement by national and international partners in key areas, including cross-border judicial cooperation to enhance both assistance to survivors and accountability efforts; addressing stigma for survivors and their children; training for security forces, in particular the Multinational Joint Task Force, on their treatment of and interaction with survivors; and provision of basic services, including sexual and reproductive health and education, as an important component of the humanitarian response;

(g) Consider developing a regional strategy to engage with women's civil society organizations and facilitate their interaction with regional bodies, including the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Lake Chad Basin Commission, through the establishment of, for example, a women's situation room for the entire region and the deployment of gender advisory expertise to the Task Force.

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Security Council

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21 July 2017

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Letter dated 18 July 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Sweden and Uruguay, as Co-Chairs of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security, and in close cooperation with the United Kingdom, hereby share a summary note of the meeting held on 4 May 2017 on women and peace and security in Mali (see annex).

We would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Olof **Skoog**
Ambassador

(*Signed*) Matthew **Rycroft**
Ambassador

(*Signed*) Elbio **Rosselli**
Ambassador

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Annex to the letter dated 18 July 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security

Summary of the meeting on Mali, 4 May 2017

On 4 May, the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security held its third meeting, on women and peace and security in Mali. The members received a briefing from the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and United Nations Resident Coordinator, Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Representative for Mali, senior representatives of the civilian and military components of MINUSMA and representatives of agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system.

The members noted the strong commitment of the Mission's leadership to the issue of women and peace and security, but were particularly interested in whether the low numbers of women within the Mission and the significant unfilled vacancies in the Gender Affairs Advisory Unit affected the Mission's ability to conduct gender and conflict analysis. Members noted the increase in incidents of sexual and gender-based violence between 2015 and 2016, but also the comparatively lower rates of conflict-related sexual violence, which might be attributable to underreporting.

While there were important gains in the representation of women in the local elections and the conference for national harmony, their participation in the bodies tasked with implementing the peace agreement and the recently appointed interim authorities remained extremely limited. The briefers noted that the United Nations was engaged in high-level advocacy to address that gap and welcomed the support and influence of the Security Council on the matter. The Mission's leadership pointed out that, while the representation of women in the interim authorities in the north was dismal, the positions there were temporary and would be coming up for election in a few months, meaning that there would be opportunities to build on the relative success in terms of the participation of women in the local elections and to implement the 30 per cent quota for women. The Mission, in partnership with the United Nations country team, had recently trained more than 400 women candidates and was working to ensure that women's views were adequately represented in the constitutional review process. Women had accounted for more than 30 per cent of the participants at the conference for national harmony. The United Nations was working closely with the Ombudsman of Mali, who chaired the process, and the final document of the conference contained direct references to women's rights, priorities and economic concerns.

With regard to the implementation of the national action plan on women and peace and security, briefers highlighted the Government's innovative approach, with a coordination unit located within the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and the Family, a plan by each government entity as to how it would contribute to its implementation and a basket fund to mobilize resources, but expressed concern that only $1 million in catalytic funding had been received to date to cover the $20 million budget.

Briefers reaffirmed that the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda concerned the entire Mission, encompassing the civilian, military

and police components, and the United Nations country team. They noted, however, the low representation of women in MINUSMA: 27 per cent of international civilian staff, 19 per cent of national civilian staff, 34 per cent of United Nations volunteers, less than 7 per cent of police personnel and less than 2 per cent of military personnel. The importance of increasing the numbers of women in the military and police components was reiterated, with it being noted that higher percentages would dramatically increase the Mission's ability to implement its mandate, engage with local populations and improve security. The military component noted the deployment in the past six months of military gender advisers in headquarters and the sectors, advocating an increased number of female military officers in the field.

The representative of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict raised the issue that the draft joint communiqué with the Government had yet to be finalized and signed, notwithstanding the sustained advocacy by the Mission's leadership, the Senior Women's Protection Adviser and the Human Rights Division. One of the signatory parties, the Platform, had signed a unilateral communiqué on preventing sexual violence in conflict and, in March, a signatory coalition armed group, the Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad, signed an action plan with the United Nations to end the recruitment and use of and sexual violence against children. The Mission was continuing its monitoring and dialogue with the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights on follow-up to cases of conflict-related sexual violence during the peak of the conflict, in 2012 and 2013, but the state of the judiciary and the lack of security were an impediment to beginning trials. Participants attributed the overall rise in the number of incidents of sexual and gender-based violence to increased reporting of incidents elsewhere in the country, other than in the north alone, a trend that was expected to continue in 2017 and underscored the need for services for survivors. The Organization was working to ensure that the new gender-based violence law addressed conflict-related sexual violence, female genital mutilation and child marriage, including by engaging with local champions, from parliamentarians to religious and traditional leaders.

The representative of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women welcomed the access by the Security Council to better information and analysis on women and peace and security issues in Mali, through both the Informal Expert Group and greater attention and specificity being devoted to women and peace and security in the Mission's quarterly reports to the Council, expressing the hope that that would also be evident in the Council's briefings and consultations.

Recommendations by the participants and the secretariat of the Group included:

(a) Ensure that, in its upcoming resolution to renew the mandate of MINUSMA, the Security Council will:

(i) Maintain the strong language on gender equality, women's rights and leadership and conflict-related sexual violence that was adopted in the previous year's resolution;

(ii) Express regret at the continued exclusion of women from the bodies tasked with implementing and monitoring the peace agreement, as well as the interim authorities appointed in the conflict-affected regions;

(iii) Welcome the gains in political representation of women and participation in elections and efforts to implement the gender quota adopted in 2015;

(iv) Call upon donors to increase funding for services for survivors of gender-based violence and the implementation of the national action plan on

women and peace and security, including specific interventions to improve access by women to justice and the capacity of rule of law institutions;

(b) Encourage troop-contributing countries to match their national averages in terms of the representation of women in the military and police when deploying troops to MINUSMA. Council members and troop-contributing countries should further discuss the representation of women at the force generation conference to be held on 22 May;

(c) That MINUSMA should develop and implement an action plan to ensure increased recruitment of women to the Mission. Considering the strong commitment of the Secretary-General to gender parity, MINUSMA should ensure full use of the tools offered by Headquarters to ensure increased representation in senior positions;

(d) That engagement with the Malian authorities should continue to advocate the finalization and signing of the joint communiqué on conflict-related sexual violence, putting in place a comprehensive and multisectoral strategy on the matter. In addition, any national strategy to counter violent extremism must address sexual violence, and victims of sexual violence perpetrated by extremist groups should be recognized as victims of terrorism.

The Co-Chairs expressed thanks to MINUSMA and the United Nations country team in Mali for participating in the meeting and committed themselves to following up on the recommendations and meeting again in 2018.

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Security Council

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21 July 2017

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Letter dated 18 July 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Sweden and Uruguay, as Co-Chairs of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security, and in close cooperation with the United Kingdom, hereby share a summary note of the meeting held on 23 March 2017 on women and peace and security in Yemen (see annex).

We would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Olof **Skoog**
Ambassador

(*Signed*) Matthew **Rycroft**
Ambassador

(*Signed*) Elbio **Rosselli**
Ambassador

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Annex to the letter dated 18 July 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security

Summary of the meeting on Yemen, 23 March 2017

On 23 March, the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security held its first meeting on women and peace and security in Yemen. Members received a briefing from the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen and the United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden opened the meeting. She highlighted the importance of the Informal Expert Group in providing Security Council experts with field-based expertise and up-to-date information and analysis and welcomed the Yemeni women's agenda for peace and security, which had been drawn up by representatives of Yemeni civil society and shared in November 2016 with the Secretary-General, the Special Envoy, the Council and the sponsors of the peace process. She particularly emphasized the importance of the participation of women in the peace process and the need for political solutions that included women in order to ensure sustainable peace and development.

The National Dialogue Conference in Yemen, held in 2013/14, saw the participation of women reach unprecedented levels and resulted in important agreements on a future constitution. It was, however, interrupted by the armed conflict and followed by two years of violence and exclusionary politics. Based on the agreed outcomes of the Conference, the Office of the Special Envoy had continued to ask the parties to ensure that at least 30 per cent of their delegates attending rounds of peace talks and political dialogue were women and that the same quota should be applied to a government of national unity, but the parties were yet to heed that call. For example, during peace negotiations in Kuwait in 2016, only 3 of 28 delegates had been women. In September 2015, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) had helped to launch a 60-member network of women from civil society and political parties — the Yemeni Women Pact for Security and Peace — which the Special Envoy identified as a regular source of advice and consultation to him and his team on a broad range of issues, from local governance to security management, de-escalation, malnutrition and other items on the agenda of the talks.

The representative of UN-Women summarized the priorities outlined by the Yemeni Women Pact in the eight meetings held by the network in the previous six months: an immediate ceasefire and the primacy of political over military solutions; the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian aid and the need for its equitable distribution; and the resumption of comprehensive peace negotiations on the basis of inclusiveness and the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference, including the importance of the representation of women at all levels of government. The network had highlighted repeatedly that civilians were the first to be affected by the embargo and that female-headed households had been the hardest hit by the suspension of the support of the Social Welfare Fund to 1.5 million beneficiaries in Yemen.

The presenters highlighted the impact of the humanitarian crisis on women and girls. Yemen had already ranked last in gender equality rankings when the conflict erupted and, six months after its outbreak, incidents of gender-based violence had increased by 70 per cent. It was estimated that 3 million women and

girls of reproductive age were currently at risk of gender-based violence. Massive internal displacement had given rise to negative survival strategies, such as child marriage and forced prostitution, in both displaced and host communities. There were concerns about possible linkages between migration, trafficking and conflict-related sexual violence by armed groups operating in Yemen, but they were vastly underreported owing to shame, stigma and fear of retaliation, lack of service coverage and the requirement for service providers to refer cases to the police. There were few medical professionals trained to respond to sexual violence and no national guidelines on the clinical management of rape. Only 45 per cent of health facilities were functioning. In only two years, the conflict had reversed two decades of gains in education, and the percentage of Yemeni women who were illiterate was projected to reach 66 per cent, up from 50 per cent only a few years previously. In some areas, more than 30 per cent of displaced households were headed by women, a notable increase from 9 per cent before the current crisis. Those households suffered from greater food insecurity and had a significantly lower monthly income.

Responding to questions about the capacity to address those challenges, the Special Envoy said that his Office was setting up an advisory unit on women and peace and security, but would have extrabudgetary funding for only a year. The humanitarian country team had had a senior humanitarian gender adviser since April 2015 and had made protection and gender the cornerstones of the country team workplan for 2017, improving the level of gender sensitivity in its assessments and projects and paying special attention to collecting sex-disaggregated data across most humanitarian clusters. The gender-based violence subcluster, which consisted of 30 organizations, had an operational presence in 19 of 22 governorates, with coordinators in Sana'a and Hudaydah in the north and Aden in the south, but had received only a quarter of the $9 million that it had requested for its programmes in the previous year.

Recommendations by the participants and the secretariat of the Group included:

(a) Fund the humanitarian appeal and elevate maternal health, family planning and gender-based violence services as priorities in the emergency response, on a par with other life-saving interventions. Specific interventions should include free access to family planning services, increasing the availability of the minimum initial service package for reproductive health in emergencies and clinical management of rape, emergency obstetric care and safe houses and material support to displaced households headed by women and girls;

(b) Facilitate the participation of women from all parts of Yemen in the ministerial-level pledging conference in Geneva in April 2017 and all other international forums;

(c) Establish monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements for conflict-related sexual violence, with special emphasis on its linkage with migration and trafficking;

(d) Request the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism to ensure that gender equality considerations informed all its assessments, technical assistance and recommendations with regard to Yemen, in accordance with resolutions 2242 (2015) and 2331 (2016);

(e) In future negotiations on the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Yemen, suggest adding the clause "including sexual and gender-based violence" in respect of violations of applicable international human rights law as part of the listing

criteria and increase the capacity of the Panel on gender-related issues, which were currently covered by one expert who was responsible for many other areas;

(f) Ensure sustainable funding to support the capacity of the Office of the Special Envoy in the area of women and peace and security;

(g) Include in future decisions, resolutions, presidential statements, press statements or other types of statements of the Security Council concerning Yemen:

(i) Calls for parties involved in the conflict to ensure that women represented at least 30 per cent of those involved in all peace negotiations and to include an independent all-women cross-party delegation,

(ii) Condemnation of all attacks on women's rights activists and women human rights defenders and calls for monitoring and reporting mechanisms that enabled women activists to safely report concerns about their security;

(iii) Calls for the United Nations and its donors to ensure that gender expertise was systematically available to humanitarian actors and that gender analyses and assessments were routine;

(iv) In recalling existing obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty, calls for the cessation of weapon transfers to parties where there was a substantial risk that they would commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian law — a recommendation been repeated multiple times by women's organizations in their reports from or about Yemen.

The Co-Chairs committed themselves to sharing those recommendations with relevant Yemeni stakeholders and to meeting again six months later.

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Security Council

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24 July 2017
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 20 July 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to express our grave concern that the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations has taken advantage of its membership of the Security Council to advance its own particular political goals. Those goals have nothing to do with the work of the Security Council or its committees. Indeed, they negatively affect the Council's work, its role in maintaining international peace and security, and the objectivity of its conduct. In particular, Egypt has taken advantage of its membership of the Security Council to make baseless claims and accusations against the Qatar, most recently at the 8007th meeting of the Security Council on 20 July 2017.

Qatar categorically rejects all of the allegations made by Egypt. International reports and confirmed intelligence from around the world have shown that the allegations are fabricated. They are part of a tendentious campaign against Qatar, one in which Egypt has participated. That campaign is based only on media reports and on information provided by illegitimate militias which Egypt supports, and which are involved in the current conflicts in the region. Such militias have no credibility, and they are known to have committed grave violations of international law and human rights.

The real reasons for this tendentious campaign against Qatar are now clear and beyond doubt. The campaign began when the website of the Qatari News Agency was hacked on 24 May 2017. Next, unilateral coercive economic measures were taken against Qatar, including an illegal and inhumane embargo that flagrantly contravenes the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States. The effect is to create a climate of instability and a precarious humanitarian situation for the peoples of the region. The claims repeatedly made by Egypt should be seen in the context of this tendentious campaign, which has failed to achieve its aims.

Terrorism is a serious challenge to the international community, and it is at the forefront of the United Nations' priorities. The counter-terrorism committees of the United Nations have a pivotal role to play in shoring up international efforts to fight terrorism, and they therefore have a responsibility to be objective, respect the provisions of international law and eschew selectivity and politicization. However, Egypt has taken advantage of its position as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) to achieve its own particular political goals and to endeavour to settle accounts with certain States. In

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so doing, it has undermined the credibility and objectivity of those committees and blatantly violated the customary mode of conduct at the United Nations and, in particular, the Security Council. It has completely ignored the mandate Security Council and the solemn responsibility discharged by its members in maintaining international peace and security.

The Charter of the United Nations sets forth certain obligations in order to ensure that the Organization can fulfil its functions and that the maintenance of international peace and security is not jeopardized. Accordingly, when Member States fulfil their duties, they should take care to act with integrity and objectivity in all matters pertaining to international relations. For that purpose, they should take action to ensure that the provisions of the Charter are not violated, that international efforts to achieve the purposes and principles of the United Nations are not undermined, that international peace and security are not jeopardized, and that the international counter-terrorism campaign is not disrupted.

Qatar has been, and will continue to be, an effective member of the international community in tackling shared challenges, particularly counter-terrorism. It will continue to cooperate closely with United Nations entities to promote peace, security, development, humanitarian relief and other goals that can help create a stable international environment and bring about conditions conducive to the eradication of extremism and terrorism. Qatar has a proven record of combating terrorism, complying with the resolutions of the Security Council and cooperating with the United Nations. It has worked effectively and constructively in the context of joint international efforts to combat terrorism and its financing and tackle the roots of terrorism. It has responded positively to the range of reports compiled by the United Nations, its entities and the international community. Those facts should dispel any claims regarding ties between Qatar and terrorism.

Qatar is committed to fostering bilateral cooperation to combat terrorism and deprive terrorist groups of the sources of funding. It has therefore signed a memorandum of understanding with the United States of America, making it the first country to put into practice what was agreed at the Arab Islamic American Summit held recently in Riyadh. Qatar has sought to bring the States of the region into the ongoing counter-terrorism efforts and has urged them to join forces in order to help contain terrorism. Those actions show that Qatar is genuinely fighting terrorism at the regional and international levels. They disprove all of the allegations that have been made against the country.

The positions taken by Qatar regarding the current conflicts in the region are fully consistent with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the consensus of the international community. Those positions are intended to alleviate suffering and find peaceful solutions to crises. They are based on clear and consistent principles, namely mutual respect between States and non-interference in internal affairs. In responding to those crises, Qatar has continued to act in the context of the United Nations, in accordance with the authoritative international resolutions, and in a clear and open manner. In every instance, Qatar has endeavoured to garner national consensus with a view to achieving stability and security and eradicating terrorism and its root causes.

For its part, the Security Council should beware of the effects of the Egyptian regime's support for parties that are working to undermine unity, stability and the consensus-based political solutions that are set out in the resolutions of the Security Council. By using counter-terrorism to achieve political ends, and by supporting the parties to conflicts through military operations that violate Security Council resolutions, international law and human rights, Egypt has helped to create an environment conducive to the spread of terrorism and extremism. While claiming to

fight terrorism, Egypt has fabricated claims against Qatar, and there are worrying signs that it taken advantage of its membership of the Security Council to undermine the Security Council's efforts to tackle terrorist entities.

Lastly, Qatar reiterates its deep regret that Egypt, which occupies the seat intended for an Arab State on the Security Council, has taken advantage of that solemn responsibility to disparage an Arab State and, in so doing, has undermined cooperation within the Arab region, exacerbated the challenges facing the region and negatively affected its peace and security.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alya Ahmed Saif **Al-Thani**
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2017/629

Security Council

Distr.: General
21 July 2017

Original: English

Letter dated 21 July 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 18 July 2017 addressed to you from the President of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord, Faiez Mustafa Serraj (see annex).

I humbly request that the present letter and its annex be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Elmahdi S. **Elmajerbi**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

17-12448 (E) 010817 020817

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Annex to the letter dated 21 July 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

It is my pleasure to write to you in your capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of July 2017. I appreciate your efforts to achieve international peace and security, and to help Libya restore security and stability and protect its unity and resources. I should like to inform you that the value of the assets held by the Libyan Investment Authority (the sovereign wealth fund of Libya) has eroded significantly because of the negative effects of Security Council resolutions 1970 (2011), 1973 (2011) and 2009 (2011), pursuant to which the Authority's assets were frozen. Those resolutions were adopted without taking into account the potential negative effect they might have in the long term on the actual value of the Authority's assets.

The freezing of the Authority's assets pursuant to the above-mentioned resolutions has caused a substantial decline in the value of the investment portfolios held by the Authority and its subsidiaries. According to the Authority's calculations and estimates, the losses amount to more than $1 billion annually. There is no reason whatsoever for those losses to occur. In certain instances, the losses enrich the foreign financial institutions at which the assets are deposited, to the detriment of the Libyan people. If this problem is not addressed immediately and decisively, it threatens to deplete the Authority's resources completely. I will not address the many reasons for the losses that have been caused by the current sanctions regime and any related technical matters, because they are too extensive to be covered in the present letter. However, I should like to put the following points before the Security Council.

First, the Security Council was officially informed of the tremendous decline in asset value and the reasons therefor more than a year ago in a letter dated 21 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Libya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/275). In that connection, it should be noted that in its report to the Security Council (S/2016/209), which was released on 9 March 2016, the Panel of Experts on Libya recommended that the Council should explicitly allow the reinvestment of frozen assets and encourage improved management thereof. Unfortunately, despite that clear and forthright recommendation, the Council did not take any real action to address this serious fault in the current sanctions regime. Resolution 2278 (2016) was adopted without any of the required amendments, thereby causing the Libyan people to incur more than $1 billion in losses in 2016. This amount is in addition to the losses that have been accumulating since 2011.

Second, in paragraph 11 of its resolution 2278 (2016), under the heading "Assets freeze", the Security Council, after taking note of the letter from the Permanent Representative of Libya (S/2016/275), affirmed its "readiness to consider changes, when appropriate, to the asset freeze at the request of the Government of National Accord". Accordingly, I have instructed the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations to once again make such a request. I have also instructed the Permanent Mission to hold bilateral meetings with Council members to clarify the situation and present, in cooperation with experts from the Libya Investment Authority, explanatory papers in response to any questions from Council members.

Third, on 26 June 2017, the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Libya sent a letter to the President of the Security Council (S/2017/543) in which he requested for a second time that the necessary changes should be made to the

sanctions regime, so as to halt the ongoing erosion of the value of the frozen assets. In addition, an entire paragraph of the letter that I sent to the President of the Security Council, which was annexed to a note verbale dated 26 June 2017 from the Permanent Mission of Libya (S/2017/544), is devoted to our request for the Council to act immediately and make the necessary changes. Regrettably, Security Council resolution 2362 (2017) was adopted without any change to the sanctions regime in respect of the frozen assets. In fact, our letter and the letter that was sent by the Libyan Mission were not even mentioned.

In view of the above, I, acting in my capacity as President of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord and in keeping with the responsibility that has been placed on me under the Libyan Political Agreement to protect the property and resources of the Libyan people, hereby formally request the Security Council to address quickly the decline and erosion in the value of the frozen assets of the Libyan Investment Authority, its portfolios and subsidiary entities. Those assets and funds belong to the Libyan people and are meant to be used by future generations. I further request the Security Council to halt the decline in the value of those assets caused by the sanctions regime that has been in place since 2011 by adopting a resolution that sets out the amendments that must be made to that regime in respect of the frozen assets, so as to improve the management thereof. When the sanctions regime was put in place, it was not meant to be a punitive measure against Libya, but rather a protective measure designed to preserve and safeguard Libyan assets and to prevent their being wasted during the transitional phase. In fact, what is happening is the exact opposite of the intended purpose of the sanctions regime, and there has been much wasting of the Libyan people's wealth.

Any delay in making the amendments requested will lead to greater losses for the Libyan people, who are facing tremendous economic difficulties. Every month, indeed, every week or even day, that goes by without the adoption of a resolution that incorporates the requested amendments means that the value of the Libyan people's assets will decline by millions of dollars every day. It is therefore completely unacceptable and unjustifiable for this dramatic decline in the value of the frozen to continue without the Security Council taking action to address this problem as soon as possible.

In conclusion, I should like to note that, in its resolutions and statements concerning Libya, the Security Council has repeatedly stated that it is committed to helping Libya and protecting the country's interests and resources. I therefore urgently call on you to give effect to those commitments. I should also like to remind of your legal and moral duties to quickly bring a halt to these completely unjustified losses and prevent further losses from being incurred. I am very confident that you will respond quickly to our just, necessary and urgent request.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Faiez Mustafa **Serraj**
President of the Presidency Council
of the Government of National Accord

United Nations A/71/994–S/2017/630

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
28 July 2017

Original: English

General Assembly
Seventy-first session
Agenda item 34
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Identical letters dated 21 July 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On behalf of my Government, in its capacity as Chair of the Arab Group for the month of July 2017, I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement that the Council of the League of Arab States adopted at its extraordinary session at the level of Permanent Representatives held in Cairo on 17 July 2017 on recent developments and Israeli violations in Jerusalem and the Haram al-Sharif (see annex).

It would be highly appreciated if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Caroline **Ziade**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

17-13022 (E) 020817 030817

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Annex to the identical letters dated 21 July 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

Statement regarding recent developments and Israeli violations in Jerusalem and the Haram al-Sharif issued by the Council of the League of Arab States convened at the level of Permanent Representatives at its extraordinary session held in Cairo on 17 July 2017

On 17 July 2017, the Council of the League of Arab States held an extraordinary session at the level of Permanent Representatives to review the unprecedented events that have occurred and the measures that were taken by the occupying Israeli authorities at the noble Aqsa Mosque, which they closed off to worshippers and evacuated. They also seized the keys to the mosque, tampered with property therein and prohibited Friday prayers and the call to prayer at the mosque. This is not to mention their efforts to change the historical status quo of the Haram al-Sharif and install metal detectors, thereby imposing yet another fait accompli and establishing a grave precedent the likes of which has not occurred for nearly half a century, when the Aqsa Mosque was set ablaze in 1969 in a criminal act of terrorism. Those actions will lead to an extremely serious escalation in the situation with grave consequences, and could spark a religious war in the region. Those events are taking place as Israel accelerates its ongoing efforts, which are backed by military force, to implement long-standing plans to Judaize the occupied city of Jerusalem and divide the Haram al-Sharif temporally and spatially. The occupying authorities have escalated their offensive against the Haram al-Sharif by increasing excavation work at the site, conducting more frequent raids and further defiling the mosque, brazenly violating the rights and sacred sites of the Palestinian people and the Arab and Muslim nations, as well as the resolutions of the General Assembly, Security Council, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the Human Rights Council, all of which have repeatedly affirmed that the occupied city of Jerusalem is an integral part of the Palestinian territory that was occupied in 1967 and underscored that the Haram al-Sharif is strictly a Muslim holy site.

The Council condemns those measures and holds the occupying authorities fully responsible for any encroachment on the noble Aqsa Mosque and any action taken with respect to its collections and documents. The Council reiterates that it rejects any change to the status quo with regard to the occupied city of Jerusalem and the Aqsa Mosque, and underscores that all Israeli actions must be halted and rescinded, and that the status quo ante must be restored. This includes the removal of the metal detectors and restoring freedom of worship and the established right of the Palestinian people to practice their religion.

The Council once again calls on the international community and international organizations to fulfil their responsibility to respond to this unprecedented Israeli aggression. They must intervene immediately and implement the relevant resolutions, particularly with regard to the protection of Islamic and Christian holy sites, and the protection of the Palestinian people in their territory and at their holy sites. The Council warns of the serious danger posed by this latest act of aggression. Israel, the occupying Power, continues to commit grave violations, defy the will of and mock the international community and flout international resolutions. Such

conduct will have repercussions for the region and the prospects of arriving at a just and comprehensive peace and implementing the two-State solution.

The Council hails the steadfastness of the people of Jerusalem and their institutions, and all of the Palestinian people for defending the Arab identity of the Holy City and the Haram al-Sharif, and draws attention to the efforts of the Palestinian leadership under His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas. The Council greatly appreciates the role played by and the efforts of His Majesty Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and reiterates its support for the Hashemites' historical role as guardians and patrons of the Islamic and Christian holy sites of Jerusalem, and its rejection of any attempt whatsoever to encroach on those sites. It also commends His Majesty Mohammed VI, the King of the Kingdom Morocco and Chair of the Quds Committee, for his efforts to safeguard the Holy City. The Council underscores that the entire Muslim nation, both States and peoples, stands with the Palestinian people and their leadership in defence of the sanctity of the Aqsa Mosque and the Arab identity of East Jerusalem, the capital of the independent State of Palestine.

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Security Council

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General Assembly
Seventy-first session
Agenda items 31 and 108

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Prevention of armed conflict

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 17 July 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the statement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Pavlo Klimkin, on the third anniversary of flight MH17 (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under items 31 and 108, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Volodymyr **Yelchenko**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

17-12474 (E) 260717

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Annex to the letter dated 17 July 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Pavlo Klimkin, on the third anniversary of flight MH17

Three years ago, a world becoming accustomed to the most despicable terrorist outrages was shocked and stunned when 298 passengers and crew members of Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 were blasted out of the skies over Ukraine.

For many around the world it brought the Russian-fomented war in Donbas to their attention for the first time.

Even for Ukrainians, including those facing death in Donbas, it was impossible to believe that terrorists had the ability to hit the civilian aircraft 11,000 m above the ground. Even with all the support Russia was known to be providing, it was simply not credible or believable in any way.

Can economic and political sanctions or awards in a criminal case compensate the grief of so many who lost their loved ones? No, I am afraid it cannot. But the Ukrainian Government has made a pledge, and we are determined to do everything in our power to unveil the truth and bring those responsible for this mass murder to justice.

And if we do not, those for whom human lives mean little more than a number or a statistic will continue in their homicidal ways. The path of truth can be both narrow and difficult. It takes time and determination to travel. But once set in motion, the wheels of justice grind inexorably — we will reach our goal.

Two investigations have been carried out into this case. The first was a technical investigation led by the Dutch Security Board. The second was a criminal investigation conducted by the Joint Investigation Team, made up of prosecutors from Ukraine, the Netherlands, Australia, Belgium and Malaysia. According to both investigations, the aircraft was downed by a Buk missile, and that Buk missile was launched from territory controlled by Russia-backed terrorists. Furthermore, the same Buk missile was brought from Russia, and after the attack its launcher was delivered back to Russia.

But we are only halfway to our ultimate objective. We want to know who pushed the button, who gave the order and what was the ultimate chain of command. In short the world needs to know, and the families of the 298 who were slain need to know, who was ultimately responsible for the murder of their loved ones.

The five countries making up the Joint Investigation Team have now decided to prosecute those responsible for the downing of flight MH17. This will be done within the Dutch judicial system, and as the process begins, we count on the support of all nations and people of goodwill.

The threshold of proof is high, and the trial must be objective and the verdict internationally recognized. Those who would foment wars in sovereign countries by supporting and funding terrorists and sending others to kill must be exposed for what they are and held to account. No less than the core values of our rules-based world order, for which the likes of the Russian Federation show so much contempt, depend on this happening.